

The author uses a wide range of both primary and secondary sources. His primary sources are drawn from the British Library, the Congregational Library in Boston, the Historical Archives of the Propaganda Fide in Vatican City, the Library of the American University of Beirut, and the archives of the Maronite Patriarchate in Bkirke, Lebanon. Although Makdisi uses only a small number of Ottoman archival documents preserved in İstanbul, the abundance of Arabic and English sources and petitions, memoirs, and journals make his analysis powerful. A primary virtue of Makdisi's approach is his in-depth analysis and interpretation of the correspondence between Shidyaq, the missionaries, and the Maronite Patriarchate. As for secondary sources, although economic history sources on missionary activity are few and far between, he reviews the social and cultural history literature on non-Muslim groups in the Ottoman Empire and missionary activities worldwide.

Based on extensive sources and a strong narrative, *Artillery of Heaven* offers a detailed view of the American missionaries' interactions with the Arab world in the nineteenth century, through the case of their failure to save the convert As'ad Shidyaq. This is a popular cultural history book that may attract both academic and non-academic readership interested in the interactions among religious communities in the Middle East. Us-sama Makdisi makes a major contribution to the rarely studied history of the missionaries in the region.

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Klaus Kreiser. *Atatürk – Eine Biographie*, Munich: Beck, 2008, 334 pages.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's story might easily be one of the most fascinating stories of the twentieth century for a biographer to write about. It might also be one of the most difficult, because Atatürk defies easy classification and judgment. Western biographies of Atatürk display a marked tendency to take up a clear position either for or against the founder of the Turkish nation-state. One of the earliest and perhaps most prominent examples of a negative and condemning biography of Atatürk is Harold Armstrong's *Grey Wolf*.¹ The positive trend in international Atatürk biographies is well-

1 H. C. Armstrong, *Grey Wolf, Mustafa Kemal: An Intimate Study of a Dictator* (London: A. Baker, 1932).

represented by the rather hagiographic German-language biographies of the late 1920s and 1930s, especially Fritz Rössler's *Kemal Pascha* and Herbert Melzig's *Kamâl Atatürk: Untergang und Aufstieg der Türkei*.² The more balanced trend is rare, and now, nine years after Andrew Mango's biography, it has found its latest addition with Kreiser's book.

There is no need to re-narrate Atatürk's life here; what deserves closer examination, however, is the way in which Kreiser constructs his narrative. He makes full use of a wide range of sources and enlivens the text with many quotes from Atatürk himself, close comrades and other contemporaries. His quotes are never redundant but support and complement the narrative in an elegant manner. He also uses many anecdotes, yet without focusing too much on the trivial. And even if trivia might have great meaning in the context of great men, as for example Emil Ludwig claimed in relation to the music they enjoy,³ there is a general tendency in Atatürk biographies to focus too much on the trivial and the anecdotal. Armstrong used such material to support his hostile perspective on Atatürk, and there was also a tendency in a previous German-language Atatürk biography to focus too much on Atatürk's relationship to alcohol and women.⁴ Kreiser makes use of many Turkish-language sources which have not been used in German publications before, thus making his book especially interesting to a German-speaking audience.

What sets Kreiser's book apart from other Atatürk biographies and, indeed, many books on Turkey is not only the well-structured narrative, but also the way in which he constantly and critically contextualizes, compares, and discusses Atatürk. Without jumping to easy condemnations, Kreiser does not shy away from comparing Kemalism to other movements of its time. Given the absence of a multi-party system and Atatürk's often dictatorial style, these difficult comparisons to the totalitarian movements of the time are one of the book's major strengths. In this context Kreiser comes to a clear judgment: Atatürk's regime was certainly dissimilar to such regimes. At the same time, Kreiser stresses that the classic classification of his regime as an educational dictatorship is not sufficient either. He claims that it transgressed the boundaries of such a concept, but admits that it is difficult to place it within existing typologies.

Towards the end of the book, Kreiser emphasizes that, more than 80 years after the establishment of the Republic, it might be legitimate

2 Fritz Rössler, *Kemal Pascha* (Berlin: R. Kittlers Verlag, 1934); Herbert Melzig, *Kamâl Atatürk - Untergang und Aufstieg der Türkei* (Frankfurt am Main: Societäts Verlag, 1937).

3 Ernst Ludwig, *Mussolinis Gespräche Mit Emil Ludwig* (Berlin: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1932), 25.

4 Halil Gülbeyaz, *Mustafa Kemal Atatürk - Vom Staatsgründer zum Mythos* (Berlin: Parthas, 2003).

to ask about the democratic legitimacy of Atatürk's system (p. 301), but claims that this will not contribute to a better understanding of the time. His example here is a point already made by Zafer Toprak: the civil law codes would not have stood a chance of being adopted democratically. It is obvious that Kreiser is defending Atatürk against harsh criticism, yet from the text itself it remains unclear whom he specifically addresses. And while he is certainly right in that morally there might be little point in doing so, this reviewer is of the opinion that such an approach does indeed "contribute to a better understanding of the time"—and much of Kreiser's text actually seems to agree. Throughout the book he is comparing Turkey to other authoritarian regimes and traces Atatürk's extraordinary position in Turkish society after he had won the war. It was Atatürk's standing, credibility and charisma which in the end enabled him to implement his policies. Kreiser claims that what sets Kemalism apart from other authoritarian movements of the time, such as fascism, was that he lacked the charisma which Hitler, for example, displayed when speaking to the German masses. Be that as it may, Atatürk did have a uniquely charismatic position within Turkish society, which enabled him to rule the way he did. All biographies of Atatürk have to explain how he was able to revolutionize Turkey in such a radical fashion. And it is perhaps no coincidence that most Atatürk biographies devote more than half of their text to the War of Independence. It is not only an exciting story and crucial to comprehending contemporary Turkish history, but also a key element in understanding Atatürk's ability to rule Turkey.

Especially in the German context where images of Turkey are heavily influenced by discourses about "guest workers," notions of underdevelopment, and the continuing EU-Turkey debate, Kreiser's biography is a much-needed book. It is not surprising that it received positive reviews in all major German newspapers. It is written for a large audience and an enjoyable read, although its academic audience may regret the scarcity of citations. Especially his use of German sources and the rich secondary literature yields many intriguing perspectives, such as the characterization of Ankara as a piece of "unexpected modernity" (p. 187) by Bernd Nicolai in his study on the work of German and Austrian architects in Turkey. Kreiser's ability to take the reader on a journey of historical imagination makes this book a true treat. For example, he is able to expand on the point that, while Atatürk had travelled widely by the end of the War of Independence, he actually knew very little of Anatolia.

Although much needed, Kreiser's book is not, as a reviewer for an important German daily has pointed out, the first German-language

Atatürk biography.⁵ Instead, it is part of a rich tradition of German-language biographies and country-studies: before the end of World War II, at least four biographies proper and another ten country-studies had been published.⁶ Including Kreiser's, a mere four biographies have been published since then.⁷ This latest one, however, will be the apex of this specific German tradition for a long time to come.

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Martin Sökefeld. *Struggling for Recognition: The Alevi Movement in Germany and in Transnational Space*, Oxford: Berghahn, 2008, 302 pages.

In *Struggling for Recognition: The Alevi Movement in Germany and in Transnational Space*, Martin Sökefeld provides us with a precise and complete account of the Alevi movement in Germany since the late 1980s. His book continues and expands some of his earlier work published in a number of articles.

The author begins with the statement that the question of identity lies at the very core of the contemporary Alevi movement. Departing from an anti-essentialist critique of identity, he studies how identities get constructed and enacted in politics of identity. He then frames the Alevi movement as a social movement seeking recognition. After recounting the development of a differentiated landscape of Alevi associations in Hamburg and in Germany more generally, Sökefeld retraces the conflicts within the movement and discusses contested claims on Alevism. He analyzes how the Alevi movement has turned the Sivas Massacre into a memory of community. He then analyzes the transformation of central ritual practices. He puts the Alevi politics of recognition into the context of German migration politics as characterized by the paradigm of cultural difference. He finally traces the transnational connections of the Alevis and their transnational politics of recognition.

5 Stefan Reinecke, "Revolutionär von Oben," *Die Tageszeitung*, 15 October 2008.

6 They were: Hanns Froembgen, *Kamal Atatürk - Soldat und Führer* (Stuttgart: Franck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1935); Dagobert Mikusch, *Gasi Mustafa Kemal* (Leipzig: List, 1935); Rössler, *Kemal Pascha*.

7 Dietrich Gronau, *Mustafa Kemal Atatürk oder die Geburt der Republik* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1994); Gülbeyaz, *Mustafa Kemal Atatürk - Vom Staatsgründer Zum Mythos*; Bernd Rill, *Kemal Atatürk* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1985).